

2026-27 Grant Information Session

Local Government Research
and Development Scheme

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge First Nations people as the traditional custodians of the land and we offer our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We are committed to strengthening connections between First Nations people, councils and the broader community.

About the Information Session

Introduction

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Purpose

- To provide an overview of the Local Government Research and Development Scheme (LGR&DS/the Scheme).
- To set applicants up for success by providing information regarding the Scheme's new application and assessment process.
- To answer any questions from potential applicants.

About the Scheme



Unique to South Australia and funded by the Local Government Finance Authority (LGFA) in line with the LGFA Act 1983



Up to \$1,4 million available in 2026-27 competitive grant round for innovative project for the benefit of SA councils and their communities.



The principles and purposes of the Scheme are decided through a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Government and the LGA.



The LGR&DS is managed by the LGR&DS Advisory Committee, whose role is to provide governance of the Scheme and provide recommendations to the LGA Board.

New Application Process for 2026-27

Following a review of the Scheme, several improvements have been introduced to strengthen strategic impact and simplify the grant process:

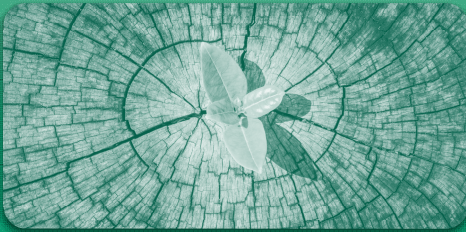
- **Strategic Research Priorities** clearer aligned with LGA strategic priorities.
- **Greater collaboration** through clearer council engagement requirements.
- **Streamlined application process:**
 - EOI shortlisting before full applications.
 - Merit-based assessment by the Advisory Committee, with expert advice where required.
 - Final funding decisions by the LGA Board.
- **Enhanced sharing of outcomes** through improved reporting and sector-wide knowledge sharing.
- **One annual grant round** open to both sector-led and LGA-led projects.

2026-27 Strategic Research Priorities

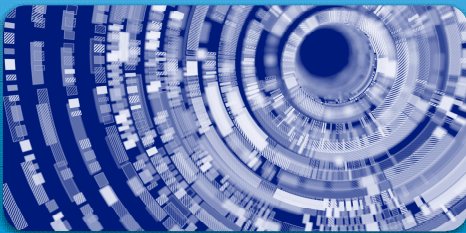
The LGR&DS are seeking innovative ideas and solutions linked to the following priorities, as aligned with [2026-27 Annual Business Plan](#) and the [LGA Strategic Plan](#)



Financial Sustainability of South Australian Councils



Strengthening the Capacity of Councils



Data and Knowledge Pooling and Insight

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest

1. Engagement with the Local Government Sector

- *The EOI should identify how local government stakeholders have been engaged in developing the proposal and how they will remain engaged throughout the project.*

2. Alignment with the 2026- 27 Strategic Research Priorities

- *EOI applications should link with one or more of the 2026/27 Strategic Research Priorities, and with the LGA Strategic Plan.*
- *Proposed projects should address an issue of significant importance to local government and not duplicate existing research or resources.*

3. Ongoing and implementable benefit to the sector

- *The likely value, practicality, and transferability of the proposed outcomes for councils and the broader local government sector.*

Stage 2 – Invited applications

Further information regarding the scoring process will be provided to invited applicants.

1. Engagement with the Local Government Sector
2. Alignment with Strategic Research Priorities
3. Project Outcomes
4. Project Evaluation
5. Value for Money

Eligible Applicants

Who should apply?

- all South Australian councils
- local government associations
- education institutions and universities
- local government professional bodies
- organisations interested in collaborating with local government.

Eligible applicants must:

- Have an ABN
- Have a minimum of \$1 million Professional Indemnity Insurance and minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance.

Funding Requirements

How much can I apply for?

- There is no minimum or maximum funding for the grant proposal.
- A total of \$1.4 million is available through the 2026-27 grant pool
- There is no set timeline
(Applicants generally use one to three years to complete a project)

What is not eligible for funding?

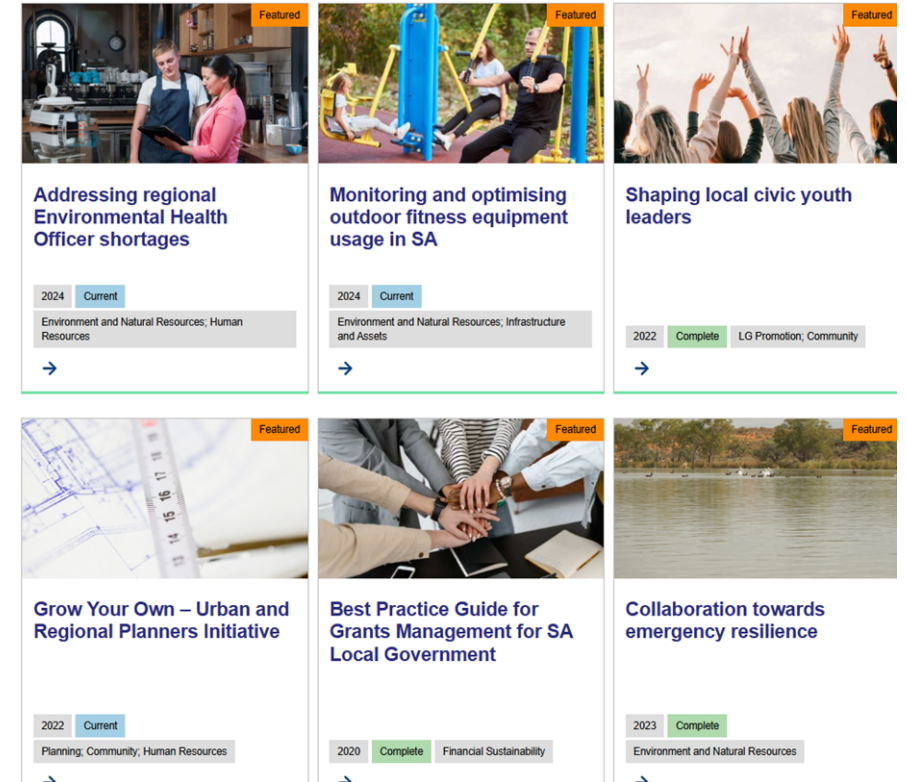
- Incentives, prizes and sponsorship.
- The purchase of capital equipment.
- Administrative overhead not directly attributable to the project.
- Training (*with exemptions*)
- Income generation (*unless declared and pre-approved*)

(Full details in eligibility policy)

Examples of previously funded projects

Project outputs are publicly available through the [LGA Research Library](#)

- Reports, resources, guidelines, and toolkits for the benefit of local government



Top tips for success

- ✓ Read the guidelines
 - Ensure that the project is eligible for funding.
- ✓ Be collaborative
 - Ensure that this project is wanted and needed by the SA local government Sector
- ✓ Be strategic, not business as usual?
- ✓ Be clear
 - Focus on getting the project description right
 - Clearly demonstrate how the planned milestones lead to the desired project outcomes.
 - Keep language simple and attachments relevant
- ✓ Include a realistic timeframe
- ✓ Demonstrate how you will evaluate the project
- ✓ Consider co-funding.



Common reasons for rejections



Lack of Local Government (LG) sector connection

Does not provide benefit to the whole LG sector (only one council/region).

Does not demonstrate how LG sector has been engaged in the development of the project.

There is no plan to share the project output across the LG sector.



Lack of Clarity

Project description unclear.

Does not demonstrate how the proposed actions will lead to the project outcomes.

Lack of links with current research.

Similar projects already exist.
The project is not eligible for funding (as per the eligibility policy).



Does not provide value for money

Lack of co-funding and buy in from local government.

Encouraged for projects seeking over \$100,000 in funding.

Too much money compared to output.

Does not produce clear outputs.

How to apply through Smarty Grants?



Apply through Smarty Grants -
<https://lgasa.smartygrants.com.au/>



Want to share the application? – set up a Smarty File
<https://app.smartyfile.com.au/> for your organisation

Key Dates 2026-27

Stage 1 - Expression of Interest (EOI) – open from 5 August 9am to 8 September (4pm)

- Information sessions held 10, 13 and 17 August.
- EOI Shortlisted by the LGR&DS Advisory Committee – late September
- EOI Outcomes shared with applicants – early October

Stage 2 – Invited Applications – mid October – mid November

- Invited Applications reviewed by the LGR&DS Advisory Committee – December
- Invited Applications – Approved by the LGA Board – January 2027 (to be confirmed).
- Successful project commencement date – February 2027

More information

Please view the following information available through the [Local Government Research & Development Scheme | LGA South Australia website](#)

- R&D Scheme Grant Guidelines 2026-27
- R&D Scheme Annual Business Plan 2026-27

Contact

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Question
time

